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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Cal Poly Professor to be Recognized for Outstanding Crime Work

SAN LUIS OBISPO - Cal Poly Professor Robert Howell will be recognized Aug. 10 by the Criminal Justice Administrators Association (CJAA) for his outstanding work in extracting information from audio and video tape to help solve crimes in San Luis Obispo County . The monthly CJAA meeting will be held on campus Aug. 10 at 9 a.m. at the Alumni House.

For more than five years, Howell, a professor of photography and digital imagery at Cal Poly, has volunteered his time assisting several Central Coast law enforcement agencies in solving crimes that involved Internet, audio and video evidence. An expert in audio and video information extraction, Howell's work has led to felony convictions, identification of suspects, and collection of evidence that might otherwise have been lost without his expertise.

Cal Poly University Police Chief Anthony Aeilts says that without Howell's help, many agencies have had to use distant resources which would have stalled investigations and cost law enforcement agencies more money.

"Bob has immediately come in and assisted with an investigation at the last minute. He has greatly extended himself for the last five years to assist our various agencies, and for that we are truly grateful," said Aeilts.

In 2003, Howell assisted the City of Pismo Beach in a homicide investigation when he extracted key evidence from video footage. The evidence he uncovered was presented at trial and led to a first-degree murder conviction.

City of Pismo Beach Police Chief Joe Cortez lauded Howell in a letter to Cal Poly President Warren J. Baker: "I was impressed with Professor Howell's knowledge, integrity and his willingness to provide this assistance in a timely manner."

Howell also developed and moderated "Poly-Force," a web-based forum for law enforcement agencies that led to the establishment of the High Technology Crime Investigation Association chapter on the Central Coast . He has designed and implemented videotape surveillance systems for unusual applications that aid in the investigation of crime at Cal Poly.

Additionally, Howell is a member of the local DUI task force and has written and produced anti-DUI commercials that air on local and statewide television networks. He also produces "Every 15 Minutes," videos geared toward students to help them make responsible choices about drinking and driving.

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